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Labour Force Statistics Highlights

A release from the Province of British Columbia's central statistical agency

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The **unemployment rate** remained the same at 6.6%.

The **participation rate** increased 0.3 percentage points to 64.4%.

The **employment rate** increased 0.3 percentage points to 60.1%.

B.C. HIGHLIGHTS

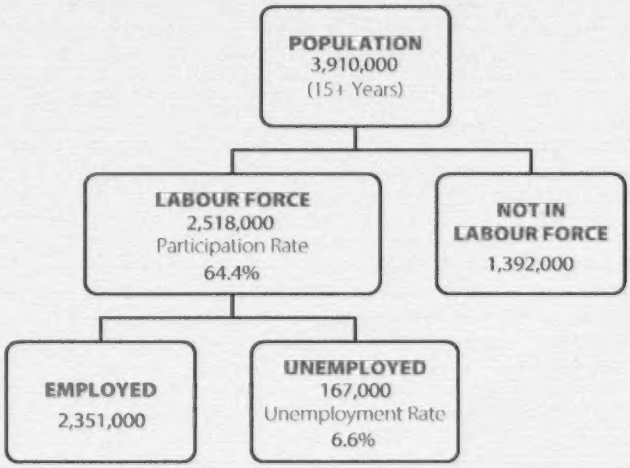
B.C. was the only province to experience job growth (+14,100) in February. The unemployment rate was unchanged at 6.6% as the labour force grew by a similar amount (+15,000). Compared to February 2015, the unemployment rate was up by 0.5 percentage points from 6.1% with growth in the labour force (+88,500) outpacing job creation (+68,800).

Part-time jobs increased substantially (+20,100), while full-time jobs decreased slightly (-6,000). The shift towards part-time employment was most notable for workers aged 15 to 24 years with the number of part-time jobs expanding (+10,700) and full-time jobs decreasing (-5,200). There was also some growth in the number of part-time jobs for workers aged 55 years and over (+4,400) and aged 25 to 54 years (+4,900).

In February, public sector employment shrank (-9,400) while private sector employment grew (+17,400) and the number of self-employed people rose slightly (+6,000).

B.C. AND THE REST OF CANADA

The unemployment rate in B.C. was 3rd lowest in Canada at 6.6%. Saskatchewan and Manitoba had lower unemployment rates at 5.9% and 6.0% respectively, while Ontario was slightly higher at 6.8%. At 7.9% Alberta ranked 6th lowest in Canada with Quebec lower at 7.6%.



NATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Canada's unemployment rate rose in February to 7.3% (+0.1 percentage points). Employment was virtually unchanged in February (-2,300 or 0.0%) with a reduction in full-time employment (-51,800) offset by an expansion in part-time employment (+49,500).

Note: All labour force statistics are seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise indicated

GENDER

In February, employment in British Columbia for men (aged 25 years and over) increased by 10,700 jobs. There were gains in both full-time (+3,400) and part-time (+7,300) jobs. The labour force (+10,300) did not rise as much as employment, edging the unemployment rate down 0.1 percentage points to 6.2%.

For women (aged 25 years and over), employment declined by 2,200 jobs and the labour force was mostly unchanged (-400), pushing the unemployment rate up by 0.2 percentage points to 5.0%. Full-time employment contracted by 4,200, while part-time employment expanded by 2,100 jobs.

Compared to February 2015, the unemployment rate rose for men by 0.7 percentage points to 6.2% and for women by 0.3 percentage points to 5.0%. Compared to one year ago, jobs for men strengthened by 23,300 (+2.2%), while for women employment climbed by 27,600 (+3.0%).

YOUTHS AGED 15 TO 24 YEARS

The unemployment rate for youth aged 15 to 24 years was down by 0.3 percentage points to 12.3% in February as a result of a larger increase in employment (+5,600) than the labour force (+5,100). Full-time jobs declined by 5,200, while part-time jobs grew by 10,700. Compared to February 2015, the unemployment rate for youth increased by 0.9 percentage points to 12.3%.

CENSUS METROPOLITAN AREAS (CMAs)

In February, employment fell in Victoria (-2,700 or -1.5%) and Abbotsford (-1,700 or -1.9%). Employment rose in Vancouver (+8,500 or +0.6%) and in areas outside the CMAs (+10,200 or +1.6%), while employment in Kelowna was steady (-200 or -0.2%).

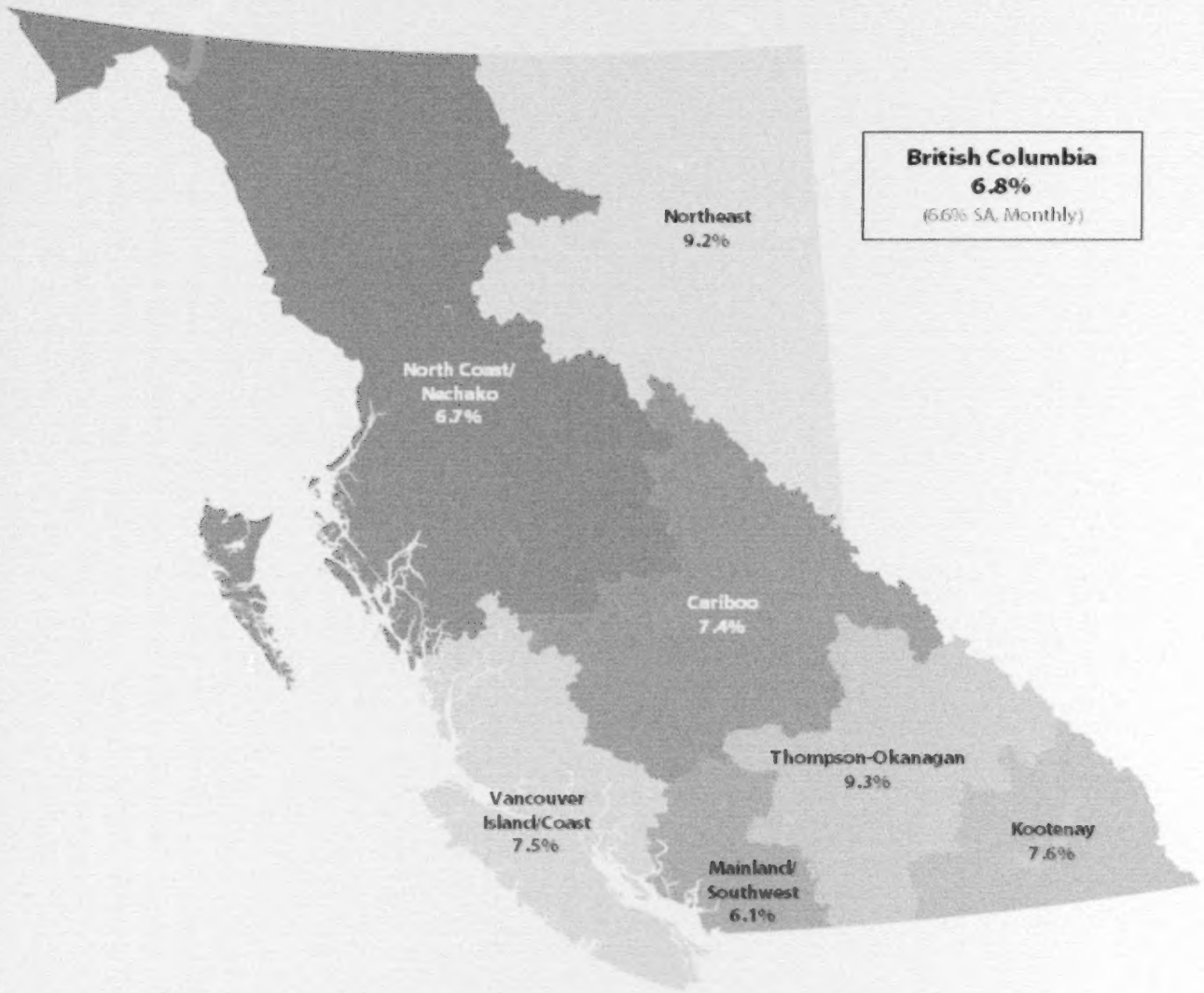
INDUSTRY

In February, employment in the goods-producing sector was relatively stable (+5,200 or +1.1%) overall. Employment increased in construction (+3,700 or +1.8%), forestry, fishing, mining, quarrying, oil and gas (+2,100 or +4.0%) and agriculture (+900 or +4.8%). There was a decline in employment in utilities (-1,000 or -6.9%), while manufacturing was relatively unchanged (-600 or -0.3%). Compared to February 2015, the goods-producing sector gained 14,700 (+3.2%) jobs.

Employment in the services-producing sector increased (+8,900 or +0.5%) in February. Jobs in wholesale and retail trade (+22,000 or +6.0%) rose substantially, followed by transportation and warehousing (+4,000 or +3.1%). Health care and social assistance posted the largest drop in employment (-8,000 or -2.7%), followed by other services (-5,600 or 5.2%), and educational services (-5,100 or -3.0%). The services-producing sector expanded by 54,100 (+3.0%) jobs since February 2015.

Visit the Labour Market Statistics page on the BC Stats website.

British Columbia Unemployment Rates
February 2016
Unadjusted, 3 Month Moving Average



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey